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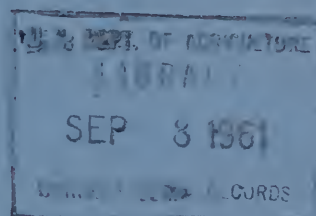


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1961

# Pacific Coast Regional Member Relations Conference

Sponsored by  
American Institute of Cooperation  
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U.S. Department of Agriculture



February 22-24, 1961  
Portland, Oregon

FARMER COOPERATIVE SERVICE  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

Joseph G. Knapp, Administrator

The Farmer Cooperative Service conducts research studies and service activities of assistance to farmers in connection with cooperatives engaged in marketing farm products, purchasing farm supplies, and supplying business services. The work of the Service relates to problems of management, organization, policies, financing, merchandising, product quality, costs, efficiency, and membership.

The Service publishes the results of such studies; confers and advises with officials of farmer cooperatives; and works with educational agencies, cooperatives, and others in the dissemination of information relating to cooperative principles and practices.

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## SESSION I

Wednesday, February 22, 1961  
Chairman: Bernard Kirsch

### VISUAL AIDS

#### When Words Need Help

Dwight Fairbanks

Words are handy tools for communicating with the people we serve. So let's begin with a good word for words.

Words on a printed page are convenient, concise capsules of information, ever ready to convey the information to the reader. In the hands of a skilled writer, words can paint pictures more vividly in the mind's eye of the reader than paintings themselves. But the meaning of words is determined by the user, not the receiver; we, the users, expect our receivers to always understand what we mean.

We make the mistake of identifying words with things, confusing the label with the object so the label is what's alive and kicking, not the object. Stuart Chase in "Tyranny of Words" reports the child as saying, "Pigs are rightly named, since they are such dirty animals." This becomes more serious when we do the same with higher abstractions: "Cooperatives are rightly named because they are such evil institutions."

These are problems of semantics. Visuals won't solve these problems alone---but they will help us be sure we are better understood.

Why do we visualize? We visualize to:

1. Attract attention; make our material more interesting and attractive.
2. Focus attention on critical points.
3. Illustrate material difficult to present in words; add realism to our message so reader (or listener) can understand it better.

How do we visualize?

1. Consider first the message. What do we want to say?
2. Then identify the audience. Who are they? What do we have to offer that will interest them, motivate them?
3. Now, fit the message to the audience. What points need clarifying (visualizing) so this particular audience will better understand? What points can be verbalized---don't need visualizing?



4. OK, you say, take Item X. How do you visualize it? Answer: Apply your imagination and decide how to translate your information from the abstract (verbal) to the real (visual). The result may be a symbol, a diagram, a chart, a graph, a picture.

Some visuals are purely decorative. There is nothing wrong with this when used sparingly. Useful visuals explain and clarify. These are the kind to develop when words need help.

### Talking Cooperatives With Slides

Helen King

Editor's note: A highlight of the opening session was a "picture talk" by Mrs. Helen King. She told how the cooperative's "Hen House Fair," a feature of the annual meeting, helped stimulate participation by the wives of cooperative members. Pointing out that one picture is worth a thousand words, Mrs. King showed a series of colored slides used to develop her department program.

Thursday, February 23, 1961  
Chairman: Ernest B. Schulz

## THE LEARNING PROCESS

### How Do People Learn?

Dr. Lillian Van Loan

### Introduction

The element which separates man and makes him superior to animals is his ability to learn. Individually and collectively, this power has advanced man in civilization until now we often wonder if man is capable of turning this superior ability into channels of constructive enterprise and thus saving himself from destruction which, if it comes, will be manmade and avoidable.

Man has learned to make satellites, which in our life had been in the realm of wildest imagination. No phantasy we ever had in our youth could equal some of the realities which face us today.

In a recent address given at the Oregon Mental Hospital, the world-famous man of letters, Dr. Aldous Huxley, reviewed briefly for a group of us the conference held in San Francisco in January to consider the topic, "Control of the Mind." Here bio-chemists, historians, psychiatrists, surgeons,



and other leaders in science from all over the world gathered. All these specialists were top flight in their field of investigation and all held one common interest, "control of man's mind."

Neurosurgeons reported on surgery performed under local anaesthetic which enabled the patient to be entirely conscious and totally aware of all the circumstances surrounding him. Then, while the brain was exposed, an infinitesimally fine electrode was touched to the frontal lobe of the patient's brain and lo, as if by magic, the patient relived in entirety an episode which happened when he was 3 years old---even to the degree that he could and did tell of the song his mother was singing.

Here is another proof of the vastness of the power of the brain-power greater than any machine with ability to store memories with precision in entirety and in sequence.

But even more startling was the work told of by the biochemists. They reported a drug so potent that it changed the very direction of man's mind. This drug given in minute amounts made individuals very amenable, very susceptible to suggestions---very willing to follow directions. This could be a power for good, as people were empowered to cast off feelings of aggression and hostility and to receive suggestions of ways and means enabling them to live the good life.

Conversely, the same drug could be used by unscrupulous politicians or dictators to convert or "brainwash" vast numbers of people in order to take over a country. This drug could be placed in a city's water supply in amounts so minute as to be nontoxic; yet its influence would be received as each individual took a drink of water from the kitchen tap at home. These are only two of the many advances of which this scholar told us, but certainly the power of these two alone is convincing proof of the great amount man has learned.

### Theories of Learning

There are many theories of learning. Hilgarde in his book "Theories of Learning," gives nine theories in detail. It is our purpose this morning to look at some of the facets of how we learn.

Learning is a dynamic force on-going and powerful. All of us are learning constantly---the changes brought about in our behavior are so gradual and made at such a slow constant pace that we are unaware of the changes for the most part. However, everything does change us to a degree. The very fact that you are here in this room seated by your neighbor will change you somewhat---you may not remain the same.

### Factors Which Determine How We Learn

These changes are influenced by three factors which interact with one another:

1. The hereditary potentialities of the individual.
2. The past learning of the individual.

### 3. The present psychological situation.

The hereditary potentiality, with which we are most concerned as we think of how we learn, is that quality we call intelligence. Research and investigation have brought us to the conclusion that intelligence is inherited---by this is meant that heredity sets the upper limits of man's intellectual capacity, and environment determines to what extent it will develop.

#### Intelligence

Tests devised by psychologists are able to ascertain to a rough degree the intellectual capacity of any individual at any age. The purpose in doing so is not to label any one but rather to aid individuals in making, as much as possible of their inherited potential. Intelligence quotients are divided roughly into areas, with 100 representing the normal; but, because no instrument yet made is absolutely accurate, anyone making a score between 90 and 110 is in the normal range.

What this means in a practical sense is shown more clearly by the concept of mental age. After much investigation and study, certain mental abilities have been agreed upon for each age level. A 6 year old child is expected to be able to do as much as these studies have shown the normal 6 year old can do. Thus, Mental Age of 6 divided by Chronological Age of 6 gives a quotient of 1. Fractions are difficult and confusing to work with; therefore this number 1 is multiplied by 100 to minimize error.

If a child of 6 years is able to do the tasks that have been set as a standard for a 9 year old child, this child is obviously a superior youngster. To express this numerically, the Mental Age of 9 is divided by the Chronological Age of 6 and the child is said to have an intelligence quotient or I.Q. of 150.

Likewise, if a 9 year old child can perform only tasks suitable to a 6 year old, the child is said to be inferior to the norm---or retarded---as 6 divided by 9 yields an I.Q. of 66. The important concept resulting from all of this is really that each person has an obligation to work to his limit mentally and further, in a democracy, every individual is treated as a person of worth and dignity. Native intelligence or ability determines what can be learned.

Consider the first year of a normal child's life. During this 12-month period he learns more, in all probability, than would ever be possible during any similar length of time in his life. He is equipped with a burning curiosity, a terrific drive to learn and all his senses aid him in this task. He forms attitudes, develops skills, takes on patterns of behavior, and becomes a unique personality, unlike any individual who has ever lived before. Research indicates that his attitudes toward life are influenced sharply during this year. If he is cared for in a warm, permissive, loving, open manner, he seems to respond by developing a similar attitude toward the world. His learning shows in patterns of behavior which he displays.



Learning is natural. To not learn is unnatural and, therefore, it is taken for granted that the child will learn many things such as the use of eyes, ears, nose, and so on. He will learn to sit up, to crawl, to walk, to respond to smiles and to encouragement. Why does this learning slow up as man attains adulthood?

### Previous Learning

Perhaps it is the second factor which should be regarded here. This is previous learning---sometimes called experiential background.

Think with me for a moment on how you perceive. If a picture is placed before you, each of you will perceive it but---as you relate what you have perceived---it will become obvious that, though all of you saw the same picture, no two of you received the same message.

### Perception

The old adage, "Believe nothing you hear and only half of what you see," could well be founded on fact---for the apparent simplicity of seeing is the long result of the learning process in which we bring to bear the whole of our past experience on the "how" and therefore "what" we see. The distorted room experiments of Ames and Cantril demonstrate this very convincingly. In this room the floor, ceiling, and back wall are all slanting. The individual looks at the room through a small round hole in one side and sees a normal rectangular room. Really, there are no right angles in the room. Then as the individual moves around the "room" and looks into it through a relatively large window, he sees the distortion.

At Oregon State College such a room has been built and small dolls have been placed in opposite corners. The individual is asked which is larger. He names one as very much larger, though when he looks through the window he readily sees that they are exactly the same. In other words, what the individual saw was prejudiced with the assumptions based on previous learning experience. Thus seeing is not only a matter of having good healthy eyes, but depends on the conditioning from past experience. All seeing is interpretation; we can interpret only what we see according to our experience.

A simple example of how we use prior learning is given in G. Stanley Hall's study, "Contents of Children's Minds on Entering School." When the little children were asked what a butterfly was, they answered that it was a fly made of butter.

I am sure no demonstration of distorted hearing is necessary. Certainly all of you are familiar with what happens with a bit of gossip, repeated three or four times. The original liar simply doesn't have a chance. Not that those repeating the story don't try to tell the truth, but interpretation enters in and the story is soon distorted.

Perception is the entire process of being aware of a situation through the senses. The perception organization at any given moment is dependent upon our past experience.

### Man Is A Total Organism.

As one thinks of perception, the truth of one psychological principle is brought into sharp focus; namely, "Man is a total organization." Actions, attitudes, feelings, motives, drives, structure have all had a part to play in ones experiential background or past perception or learning.

### Man Is Unique

No two individuals can perceive the same set of events from the same point of view, simply because it is impossible for two individuals to occupy the same place at the same time. Experiences may be more alike as they are more and more simple, but they are less and less alike as they become more complex.

### Perceptual Rigidity

Another factor enters into "how we learn" as we consider perceptual rigidity. This is a quality or factor which all of us have to a degree. Often it interferes with our learning. To illustrate: During fall term the students at OSC put on a play which I attended. One character part was very well played. The part was that of an unethical young woman. The audience reacted correctly when they disliked this person intensely.

This term as one of my classes assembled for the first time, I saw an attractive young woman in the back of the room. My instantaneous reaction was one of acute dislike. I took myself to task and wondered of whom she reminded me that I disliked so much. I saw her three times before I recognized this attractive, charming, intelligent, friendly girl as the girl who had aroused such intense audience reaction during this play. Usually the reason is not so obvious, or we don't stop and analyze why we take an instant dislike. Some people even pride themselves on "character judging"---whereas in all probability the person reminds them vaguely of a disliked other person or some otherwise regarded person.

This perceptual rigidity is also often responsible for our set opinions, opinions which will not change as a result of learning because we refuse to learn.

### Unconscious Motivation

Much of this refusal is due to unconscious motivation, and we have difficulty or find it impossible to explain the fundamental reasons even when we are being honest with ourselves---for these reasons are buried deep in our unconscious and only minor cues are present in our conscious.



## Over Specialization

There is so much to learn in the world that it is not possible for many people to be specialists in more than one field. As we specialize more and more, we limit ourselves in many other fields until we finally know so little about them that we defend ourselves by saying we aren't interested in such things. In so doing man often sells himself short and uses a very small proportion of his capacity to learn.

Think of a man like Albert Schweitzer who is recognized as an authority in many fields. He is a theologian, a medical doctor, an musicologist, a scientist, an artist on the organ, a composer of fine music, and authority on Bach, a great humanitarian. He is one person who seems to have gone a long way toward optimizing his potentialities for learning.

## Learning - Human Relations

Learning in the field of human relations is difficult for many people because of ego involvement. The more mature a person is emotionally, the easier it is for him to get along with his fellow man. Here the greatest body of knowledge for man to master is self knowledge. It is significant that great scholars of all time have urged people to 'Know thyself.'

Knowing one's weaknesses and strengths aids one in understanding why other people irritate and annoy us or why other people make us feel inferior or superior. We are involved with self. This is one of the reasons we have difficulty in remembering names. We are concerned with self as we are introduced; thus we occupy our mind with thoughts of how the other person is regarding us, whether we are making a good impression on this person, whether we are looking our best, and so on. If instead we occupied our conscious mind with thoughts of the other person, we would have many cues to attach to the name and we would recall the name with greater ease.

Though the small child is still self centered, he has the ability to sense how other people are feeling. This quality is called empathy. Many adults have lost most of this quality as they have become more and more self centered. A good salesman must have empathy. An employer has a far better chance to be a good employer if he has this quality. Often he can develop more power to empathize with others as he frees himself from excessive self involvement.

## Emotions

Emotions play a significant role in all learning. Research shows us that we are able to learn faster and better in an atmosphere which to the individual is pleasant. We also learn more and retain the knowledge longer when we get approval as a result of our actions.

## Nothing Succeeds Like Success

We are able to learn more when we have a feeling of confidence and trust in our ability to learn. The person who doubts himself is erecting a

mental barrier which renders the learning task harder or even impossible. In spite of the articles that have been published in the last few years on "Why Johnny can't read," there is evidence to show that it isn't the fault of the school largely, but rather because of attitudes, feelings, and emotions which Johnny as a very small child has built up regarding himself. He has erected barriers to learning before he entered school at all. All of us carry an emotional climate with us. This strongly influences all learning. When results of learning give us pleasure, enjoyment, a feeling of usefulness or satisfaction, we are made more ready to learn in the next situation.

Fortunate is the child whose curiosity has been stimulated and who has been allowed to continue to regard learning as exciting and interesting. When he can keep the sense of discovery and exploration and add to it the satisfaction of personal accomplishment, he can go forward easily to new and harder tasks of learning with the feeling of confidence and pleasure of challenge.

### Learning by Doing

All people learn more when they participate. This is because they are ego involved. In a conference such as this, you will learn far more in the small discussion groups in which you speak than you will in a passive situation such as this. Whatever man learns he must learn for himself. No one can learn for him.

Anne Sullivan worked a miracle for Helen Keller. She loved her so much that she would have done anything for her. She taught her to speak---but Helen Keller had to speak for herself---Helen Keller had to think for herself. Anne Sullivan could set the stage for learning, but she could not learn for her.

We can learn from people. We learn best when we like and respect people. But we must do our own learning and we must accept the responsibility of the learning task.

As I grow older I am increasingly interested in the old adage, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks," and I find as I study the implications of this saying, that I am willing to discard it almost entirely and substitute the equally old and contradictory statement, "You are never too old to learn." To learn one needs to desire to learn and have the will to learn. Perhaps another old adage will make my point clear, "You can lead a horse to water, but you can't make him drink"---but you and I know that you can make him drink, if you salt him first! Similarly with the old dog you can teach him new tricks if you can awaken a real desire to learn and show him the need to learn.

The need for learning is greater today than ever before. There is more to learn than at any time in history. The changes are coming about at such a rapid pace that one feels like Alice in Wonderland that one must run as fast as one can to stay in the same place. With learning we move forward with confidence to greater control and domination of our environ-



ment. To learn is to really live. It is far more dangerous to grow fat mentally than it is to grow fat physically. The difference between a rut and a grave is one of dimension. Learn---live---learn.

Applications of Learning Principles: To the Member Relations Program  
in a Local Cooperative.

J. Elmo Packer

I have been really impressed with Dr. Van Loan's statements: "There is more to learn than at any time in history," and "To learn is to really live." It is my prayer that man's mind will be so directed that we will receive the great joy that can come through proper assimilation of knowledge in this great day.

New Industry

My business, as most of you know, is that of managing an artificial breeding cooperative.

In 1949, when a committee approached me asking if I would fill in as manager of a recently organized Artificial Breeding Association, my answer was a flat No. You see I had specialized during college and graduate school in how to get milk out of a cow, not how to get a calf. But the committee had this all worked out. They would send me back to Minnesota for 2 weeks, and I would know all about it. So I became a specialist in Artificial Breeding in 2 weeks time.

But it was not quite this simple either. I also was expected to become a specialist in executive management, eventually to supervise a personnel of 150 employees and to satisfy a membership of 20,000 farmers.

I was soon to learn that it was not possible to teach the average farmer the things I had reviewed in 2 weeks time. The average farmer knew that it was impossible to get a calf artificially and even if you could, the calf wouldn't be any good. So while I was learning, I had to teach the farmer to learn.

Teaching

Not long after I accepted this job I maneuvered an invitation to speak on artificial breeding to an FFA group of boys in Eastern Idaho. This was an evening meeting so the dads were also invited. I walked before a group of 142 people and there were two women seated on the front row.

My discussion that evening was to show the group how to get a calf artificially. I had with me, not the plastic model of a cow's reproductive tract, which I now use, but an actual reproductive tract from a cow slaughtered for beef that day.

How would you like to have been in my shoes that evening? I was thankful I had learned long ago that women know more than men and are also interested in learning. When I concluded my discussion, most of the questions were asked by those two ladies, and they asked the most intelligent questions of the evening.

Now, 11 years later, we attend annual membership meetings with half the audience husbands and the other half their wives.

I presented this same demonstration to a bankers' dinner meeting one day. Thank goodness they called on me after the meal instead of before. It went over with such interest that a second group of bankers asked for the same talk, 30 days later.

I learned that regardless of how much money or how smart a group might be, they still love to know the simple facts of life.

### Cooperation

In working with this group of farmers I learned early that it was important to impress upon their minds the great values of cooperating together.

We devised a few tools such as this chart to impress upon their minds their values to their own organization.

Even though there needs to be a board of directors, a manager, and an executive board, the most important links in the entire chain are still the members who tie and hold this chain together.

### Simple Learning

When I went back to college the professors tried to teach me the complicated chemical structure of a germ cell chromosome---how in this conglomerated mass pairs of genes are linked together in many different combinations to bring out the traits that make each individual different from any other individual.

I soon learned that I could not impress the average farmer with a technical approach. I had to set up a simple picture of genetics with one simple little pair of chromosomes carrying a simple pair of genes to portray the inheritance source of eye color, hair color, Lethal factors, milk production, and so on. This will satisfy the average farmer that he has now learned enough about the subject of genetics and how he can use it to improve his standard of living.

Our cooperative had been in business about 9 months when we found some farmers ready to quit the program because they believed artificial breeding produced only bull calves. Here again we might have launched into a technical discussion of complicated chemical reactions within sex cells, but we found that the average farmer was satisfied with a simple chart of cell division of male and female cells, which we devised for demonstration.

This chart shows that sex is a fifty-fifty proposition, and if enough numbers are mated together, there will be as many females as males.

### Returns

In the middle of, and along with all these little details of proving that this new industry could work, it was necessary to show the farmer some returns in realistic benefits.

To help us demonstrate benefits of our program, we worked up the following table.

#### Why Breed Artificially?

	<u>Milk</u>	<u>Butterfat</u>
	Pounds	Pounds
U.S. all cows.....	6,162	245
U.S. Dairy Herd Improvement Ass'n.....	10,068	394
Idaho Dairy Herd Improvement Ass'n.....	9,802	392
Utah Dairy Herd Improvement Ass'n.....	10,618	406
Cache Valley Breeding Ass'n.....	13,080	468

This tabulation points out the unprofitable level in production of all cows in the United States. By using service from superior sires with Cache Valley Breeding Association, members can realize production double of that on the national average.

A farmer must be brought to realize the importance of time and efficiency in these fast-moving competitive times.

#### \$1000! 4 Cows or 25 Cows?

Number of cows	Butterfat average per cow (Pounds)	Total butterfat (Pounds)	Return above cost of feed
25	200	5,000	\$1,000
13	350	4,200	\$1,000
10	413	4,130	\$1,000
7	450	3,150	\$1,000
4	552	2,208	\$1,000



This chart points out quickly how foolish it is to cultivate all the land it takes to feed 25 cows and all the time required to milk and care for 25 cows when the same returns can be realized with 4 cows. And there are many farms today reaching the four-cow production levels.

### Management

Along with all this buildup in genetic possibilities, we have some extension work to do.

We must show the farmer the benefits of improved management along with the buildup of inheritance.

#### Pasture Production 150 Days

<u>Dairy</u>	<u>7 Year Average</u>
Milk per acre.....	8,684 pounds
Fat per acre.....	324 pounds

#### 2 cows per acre

<u>Beef Steers</u>	<u>Return</u>	<u>Steer Per Acre</u>
Pasture Only.....	\$221	4.63
+ Hay.....	257	4.72
+ Stilbestrol.....	257	4.63
+ Hay + Stilbestrol.....	265	4.72

This picture has convinced many farmers of the ease in making more net profit per acre from well-managed pasture land than could be realized from cash crops.

If the sons have all left the farm and Dad is too old to milk cows any more, he can still make \$221 an acre pasturing beef steers as compared to \$324 an acre when milking cows.

### Applied Methods of Learning

In addition to these personal approach methods of teaching our members, we have of course used many of the recommended systems of learning, and have come to the following conclusions:

1. Personal approach is always the best.
2. Newspaper and radio contact is effective but expensive, and we always keep in mind we are spending the members' money.

3. General membership meetings are a must.
4. Local unit meetings are always effective.
5. The use of a 35 mm. color slide machine has been a great help in acquainting members with their herd sires of outstanding progeny.
6. Simple gadgets such as billboard machines are doing wonders in teaching our members the values of membership in Cache Valley Breeding Association.
7. 16 mm. movies help our members see the complete story of Cache Valley Breeding Association.

You may recall my earlier mention of difficulty in convincing farmers of the possibility of getting a cow in calf by artificial breeding. Some members thought that if a cow did not conceive, the sperm were all dead.

By using this movie story, we show our members proof that a good viable sperm has been used in bringing improved inheritance into their herd of cattle.

I appreciate this opportunity of meeting with you in this Cooperative Member Relations Conference.

Applications of Learning Principles: To the Member Relations Program  
in a Regional Cooperative

R. S. Durkee

A wise man once said: "The great teacher is the one who makes the difficult seem easy."

Learning denotes changes in the individual's behavior which result from interaction with his environment.

Take the teenager and his jalopy. He is learning from the time he starts to find a means of transportation for his newly obtained possession from where it is to the lot where he will be free to devote his loving attention to it. There he will create a climate of learning which will reach a climax when the loved jalopy can depart under its own power.

In the meantime he has learned from mistakes, from trial and error, or from any other teacher from whom he may obtain a bit of information. It may be an older pal, a gas station attendant, a garage mechanic, or even his math teacher.

Whether we are thinking of the local cooperative or the regional, let us take a lesson from the teenager and his jalopy and surround ourselves with a climate of learning that will permit us to learn from any teacher regardless of the field from which that teacher comes.

The member relations program in the regional cooperative will be largely dictated by the type of individuals who compose the local affiliates. If the local cooperatives are composed of individuals who have learned the basic principles of cooperation, know how to say our association rather than your association, have learned that every year cannot be an outstanding success, and have learned to judge the worth of the employees in the organization---then the regional will have as smooth sailing as any human organization has a right to expect.

When the Farm Bureau set up its Advisory Councils it took a step that applied the foremost learning principle to the regional farm cooperatives. That principle is the idea that we learn by doing and that doing is often the correcting of our mistakes.

In the Farm Bureau Advisory Councils, individuals learned the facts of cooperation by putting their thoughts into words when debating with their neighbors, and thus became fighters for cooperatives---for we support the person, thought, or thing for which we have fought.

In my long experience as a teacher, I learned that one can never be sure that all members of a class have heard the same thing; therefore we must say the same thing over and over again in as many different ways as possible. This means that we must tell the cooperative story at annual meetings, in committee meetings, in letters, in our membership publication and in any other ways that we can think of. Machinery must be set up so that learning will be a continuous process.

### Contribution of Farmer Cooperatives to the Development of Oregon

F. E. Price

Oregon State College included marketing within its programs early. In 1913, undergraduate courses in marketing were offered by Dr. Hector MacPherson. Research projects of consequence also were in effect soon after, one being concerned with the marketing of certain fruits; another with dairy products.

The Extension Service established a field specialist in marketing in 1914, the first of the 11 Western States to employ an Extension man in this field. Earliest work of this man was in changing the handling of eastern Oregon wheat from a sack basis to bulk handling through elevators. This likewise was the major activity of his successor. Other early work of these specialists, for another man was added in 1930, was assisting the organization of Interstate Associated Creameries---now the Dairy Cooperative Association ---and before that of the Pacific Wool Growers and the Pacific Poultry Producers---now Oregon Egg Producers.

While we are considering the early development of cooperative associations in the State of Oregon, it might be well to recall some of the things that have happened outside of the classroom and not included in research or extension at Oregon State College. I refer now to the organization and suc-



cessful operation by the students of Oregon State College of two cooperatives which date back beyond the memory or knowledge of most of the persons attending this meeting.

In 1914, the Oregon State College cooperative book store was organized. Students and faculty who were studying cooperatives believed that such an organization could render a very definite service to the campus. The activation of this cooperative proved to be a wise decision, as it has operated successfully and continuously through the years.

Another student cooperative was organized in 1919. I remember the occasion quite well, as I was a student at Oregon State College at that time and participated in the organization activities as an officer of my fraternity.

This cooperative was organized entirely by students with faculty counsel and advice for the purpose of purchasing and distributing food and other supplies to the fraternities, sororities, and clubs.

This organization, known as the Cooperative Managers Association, representing the business managers of each of the student living groups, has been the outstanding organization of its kind in the United States, doing a three-quarter-million-dollar business annually. It owns its delivery trucks and it has a large concrete warehouse adjacent to the railroad siding where carload deliveries of sugar, potatoes, and such commodities can be received, and where shipments by truck can be conveniently delivered.

I think a brief reference to these two successful cooperatives, each of which has operated continuously for more than 40 years, speaks well for the teaching program at the college relating to principles and practices of cooperatives.

As not infrequently happens in various fields of work of agricultural colleges, the Extension policy in connection with marketing came under fire here in Oregon, even by some of the people most directly served. In the early 1920's when a wave of enthusiasm for cooperative marketing stemming from activities of Aaron Sapiro swept the State, the college held divergent views as to methods of establishing further cooperative marketing. It refused to adjust its advocacy to the high-speed and high-pressure organization plans characteristic of the Sapiro movement. Notwithstanding considerable criticism and a good deal of pressure, it maintained its position. This stability was justified, the opinion was, by later development of a long list of troubles resulting from high-pressure organization methods.

Great service was rendered to the marketing program of the college, and we here like to believe to the farmers of the State, by two men who were employed for a considerable period as marketing specialists. These were the late George Gatlin and the late C. J. Hurd. They both, we believe, rendered immeasurable service in clarifying the thinking of Oregon people generally in relation to many of the problems of cooperative marketing.

At the present time we have a much larger Extension staff in the field of marketing, consisting of one specialist for each of the following commodity

groups: Seed, dairy, fruit and vegetables, poultry, and forest products and one additional specialist serving cooperatives in particular and handling other general marketing problems. The release of market information is a particularly important part of our Extension marketing program. The Experiment Station marketing research staff has been increased substantially also in recent years.

Much of the agricultural development of Oregon has been closely related to the development of farmer cooperatives. Perhaps we should be more emphatic in this statement and say that some of our major agricultural industrial developments have started with the formation of farmer cooperatives, which have continued to serve their members in a commendable manner even though they have gone through periods of great change.

More than 50 years ago it was decided that the coastal region of Oregon was particularly adapted to dairying. In these pioneer days milk in the somewhat remote rural areas was used for the manufacture of butter or cheese, with other dairy products being of minor importance. People skilled in the manufacture of cheese were attracted to Tillamook County, but there were limited facilities where the cheese could be manufactured.

In 1910, numerous small groups of farmers formed cooperatives for the purpose of building and operating cheese factories. Road construction was quite limited; and during the heavy rainy season of the winter, transportation of milk to a central factory was quite impractical. For this reason the community cheese manufacturing associations seemed most practical. This program, which started in 1910, continued until there were 20 or more local farmer cooperatives engaged in the manufacture of cheese from milk produced in Tillamook County.

The managers and cheese makers in charge of these factories began at once to apply a very fundamental principle for successful marketing; namely, the manufacture of a high-quality product. This philosophy has prevailed down through the years, and as a result cheese manufactured by the Tillamook County Cooperative Association has maintained an enviable position in all of the many city markets where this product is sold.

In more recent years when more scientific methods of quality control were developed through research and after the road system of Tillamook County became fully developed, these 40 or more associations formed an overall manufacturing organization. They constructed a central factory where the latest in facilities---including vast refrigeration storage areas---were made available to the cheese manufacturers and management.

This great farmer cooperative has remained quite close to its producer members. It has been more than a marketing association; it has been the basis for the full development of the dairy industry of Tillamook County. It has been alert to new discoveries through research and has applied these new discoveries in the manufacturing program. And it has established its own scientific laboratory for quality control. The cooperative has been fortunate in having good managers, but the managers have been fortunate in having a strong farmer-producer membership group devoted to the progress of the association as a whole.



The Eugene Fruit Growers Cooperative Association has a distinguished record of pioneering in the development of the Willamette Valley's multi-million-dollar fruit and vegetable industry.

Near the turn of the century farmers of the Eugene area discovered that the Willamette Valley was adapted to the production of fruit and vegetables of high quality, but that the fresh fruit and vegetable market was of little consequence. If such an industry was to be developed, it required processing so that these products could be transported to cities outside the producing region, where such products were in strong demand. Just as cheese factories were being started in Tillamook County, fruit and vegetable canneries were put into operation in Lane County.

The Eugene Fruit Growers Association was particularly fortunate in having a man with great vision, determination, and know-how as their leader. I refer to J. O. Holt, to whom much credit must be given for the success that came to the Eugene Fruit Growers Cooperative Association. The Association has continued to be very fortunate in having men of strong character and sound business principles to lead it in the following years.

This industry has meant much to the farmers of Lane County, but it has also meant much to other people who reside in that county. The annual sales volume of Eugene Fruit Growers is presently about \$10 million. About a third of the \$10 million of annual sales is kept in the county to meet harvesting and production payrolls on the farm and processing payrolls in the canning and freezing plants.

An outstanding characteristic of this industry is that it does not deplete the natural resources of this area. The raw materials which are produced on the farms of the Eugene area for the processing plants or factories constitute a renewable resource, or in other words, a perpetual supply on which cities can be built with great security. The fruit and vegetable processing industry has grown from this pioneering start until it now is in the lead position among all the agricultural industries of the State in making up the \$147 million payroll paid direct to labor for farm production and farm processing of agricultural crops in Oregon.

In addition to the payroll made possible by this industry, each of these \$10 million annual sales organizations, and we have several of them, pay property taxes exceeding \$40,000 a year in their respective communities, which help support schools and county governments. An organization of this size will hire from 1 to 200 full-time employees and 1,000 seasonal workers. Many of them will be young people out of school during the summer vacation season.

Considerable credit should go to a more recent organization, the Pendleton Grain Growers, Inc., which markets one of our crops generally referred to as a surplus crop; but in addition to its marketing program it is giving endless hours of attention to ways of developing the region in which it operates. It has encouraged and demonstrated opportunities for livestock feeding in its region. It proposes in essence to make livestock into individual factories to consume hay and grain produced in the region and then to manufacture it into meat products for distant markets.

This association has also been an outstanding leader in advocating application of technical development. For example, it offers a soil testing service to its members as a basis for a more efficient fertilizer application to reduce production costs.

I think we might consider for a moment problems that cooperatives will face in the future. Many of these will be problems brought about by the economic growth and development that is characterizing all of agriculture and all of the industries of this country. Our agriculture staff has been giving considerable attention to problems of agricultural adjustment. Since the cooperatives that we have under consideration have been organized to serve farmers principally, we might consider some of the adjustments that have taken place and are continuing to take place among agricultural producers.

Farmers have been making substantial adjustment in the use of land, labor, and capital. The average net annual migration from farming in the United States in recent years has been about 800,000 people. Since 1950, the number of farms has been declining by about 100,000 annually. Cropland harvested has declined somewhat since 1950 and is now about the same as in 1910. Man hours worked have declined 2.3 percent yearly since 1940, or a total decrease of 46 percent.

Capital investment in farming has been increasing about 1.5 percent yearly since 1940, replacing some of the labor resources. This represents a 30 percent increase in capital invested in farming during the past 20 years. In spite of these adjustments of labor and land out of farming, the new combination of resources is bringing forth an increased output that exceeds the population growth. If the farm output of 1959 had been produced with 1939 farming methods, it would have cost (based on 1959 costs) an additional \$11 billion.

Cooperatives that serve agricultural producers who are engaged in adjustments such as I have described are likely to be faced with adjustments within their organization also. It is generally agreed that agricultural adjustments are likely to continue at an accelerated rate in the years immediately ahead. Will the same number of cooperatives be needed to serve the greatly reduced numbers of farmers that we now have and the further reductions that may come in the future?

If cooperatives are not to be reduced in numbers, is there some way that they can form alliances grouped together so that services can be set up to care for several organizations? While we are considering this possibility we must look squarely at other situations around us; namely, the railroads that are consolidating, airlines that are consolidating, and many other private organizations that are consolidating, with the hope of reducing operating or production costs.

While cooperatives will be facing many new problems, the old fundamental requirements of the past must not be forgotten. I think we will agree that good performance in the past does not guarantee success in the future. Managers and boards of directors must keep this fact constantly before them. As in the past, associations must be well financed, well

managed, and must have a well-informed membership. Associations must accept the proposition that many of their charter members are no longer with them and present members do not have the inspiration and incentive that caused the first group to form the organization. New members may have to be sold on the importance of and the justification for the cooperative.

I am thoroughly convinced that the opportunity for cooperatives to serve farmer members is as great as, or greater than, it has ever been. However, some major adjustments are likely to be closer than we think. Since the cost-price squeeze has never been greater, the need for both efficient production and efficient marketing is apparent. I do not expect that all of our farm marketing will ever be done through cooperatives. Marketing through both private cooperatives and other types of organizations presents opportunities for worthwhile comparisons and competition.

The opportunity for service was never greater.







## SESSION II

Thursday Afternoon, February 23, 1961  
Chairman: Bernard H. Shulte

### EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION

#### Using Membership publications from Locals to Producers Effectively

Drew West

Most large cooperatives have long recognized the need for periodic contact with all of the members and farm leaders in the area they serve. As a result they have developed effective, high-quality membership publications in either newspaper or magazine style. They are usually prepared by trained and experienced information personnel, with an aim to disseminate pertinent information from cooperative to producer.

When smaller cooperatives see the need for an inexpensive membership publication or newsletter, they are often faced with the problem of a lack of trained personnel to put out such a publication. Thus the publication is often neglected, to the disadvantage of the cooperative membership.

In effect, a membership publication says what management is unable to say in any other way. As management's vocal cords, the membership publication should receive highest priority attention so that it accurately provides pertinent facts.

The membership should constantly be reminded of their responsibilities as owner of the cooperative through the pages of the membership publication. Through the "power of the press" this sense of responsibility is developed and the membership acquires a feeling of ownership and loyalty. Other vital functions performed by the membership publication are the development of member interest in the continued success of the cooperative, and continued support of cooperative functions by the complete membership.

In summary, the membership publication promotes the sound growth of a cooperative.

Needless to say, the importance and value of a membership publication has been proven time and time again, and has shown itself to be well worth the required effort and expense.

Having established that a membership publication properly used can be an important tool in the continued growth of a cooperative, the next basic objective is accomplishment of a program aimed at organizing such a publication.

A good membership publication must be based on sound objectives. But, what are those objectives? I think they can best be answered by quoting from a recently published manual on "Effective Communications in Company Publications" by C. J. Dover, which groups "objectives" into the following four main types.

1. To give recognition to individuals and groups and help make all feel a part of the whole.
2. To inform with news and facts.
3. To explain--all for better understanding.
4. To promote and stimulate action for the common good.

As an editor, I think these objectives can be summarized in the statement, "Make a profit over a period of time." This needs some clarification since a cooperative publication's profits are measured differently than those of a commercial newspaper or magazine. Profits to those in the cooperative journalism field can be reaped through increased cooperative membership, increased cooperative sales, or through increased understanding and participation between management and the membership.

Once the objectives are established and the membership publication becomes a reality, changes in the publication should be evolutionary + not revolutionary.

Essentially the cooperative publication is a sales tool, since each and every cooperative has a tremendous sales job on its hands. We are selling the philosophy, the advantages, the benefits, and the results of cooperation - - and specifically of our own cooperative. Selling, in this case, is telling - - communicating of information both to our own membership and to those nonmembers we wish to influence. We have to tell them what we are doing and why.

While it seems obvious, it needs reiterating. This means three things:

1. We must get our publications read widely by the intended audience.
2. We must get our messages understood by the audience; and,
3. We must get our messages believed by such audiences.

In order to increase membership in our cooperatives, we have to convince the members, and the people we hope will become members, that they will personally derive benefits from membership. I quote Jack Shepard, Director of Public Relations for Calavo Growers of California, who in six words expressed this concept of cooperative publication - - "We must build an informed membership." An oft-quoted remark by Ralph Bunje is this: "If any group of farmers are given all the facts, they will never make a wrong decision." That's the job of the cooperative publication - - giving all of the facts to all of the members and, incidentally, to those nonmembers we hope to persuade to join.

Now, let's look at the audience we are informing. We have directors, employees, nonmembers, opinion-influencers, community leaders, men, women and children. Needless to say, each is not necessarily interested in all

the information covered in a cooperative publication, but a good cooperative publication will strive to have information in each issue which will be of interest to each of these segments or groups.

It would be impossible to discuss all the types of information that would appeal to each type of reader, and I don't propose to do so at this time.

However, by studying your audience carefully, you will soon learn what will appeal to the majority of each group.

The printed word is a proven medium of information, and we at the California Almond Growers Exchange feel we have been using it successfully for over 50 years.

Back in the early days of the Exchange a mimeographed single sheet "growers bulletin" was distributed periodically, apprising the membership and others of the almond market, latest developments in almond culture, and disseminating specific Exchange business, such as where to deliver almonds at harvest time, the price of burlap sacks for bagging the almonds in the field, and the latest methods for destroying pests.

In the 20's the single sheet gave way to "The Minute Book," which was a bimonthly periodical printed on 8½ by 11 inch paper and consisting of approximately 20 pages.

This again proved inadequate and in the late 1930's "The Minute Book" in turn gave way to "Almond Facts." This publication, now in its 25th year, embodies a tabloid newspaper style to match its size and uses the "bold" approach on headlines.

Usually no more than five stories are started on the front page; and to get the readers inside the "book", the stories are usually continued from page 1 to an internal page.

Almond Facts is printed on a bimonthly schedule and runs usually 12 pages in length. One notable exception was our 50th anniversary edition, which ran 20 pages and featured for the first time a four-color illustration on the front page.

We have talked with growers throughout our area and they report that because of the newspaper style they can quickly pick out stories they wish to read and then keep the rest of the issue for future reference because of the information it contains. Some growers have bound volumes of Almond Facts which in itself is quite a tribute to the importance the growers attach to their newspaper.

I have long personally favored this type of publication, but have found that it does not always fit the needs of a cooperative. It is relatively expensive and can become a difficult project when not properly laid out or when it features the use of inept editorial material or uninteresting headlines.



Where price is of prime importance, each cooperative editor must look over his own program and decide for himself the type, layout, and size of publication that would be most effective for his readers.

No matter, however, what size publication is decided upon, the same basic factors will apply; that is, the news must be clear, factual, concise, and understood by all segments of the readership.

To get our publication understood takes more than just effective writing. The conscientious cooperative editor must fulfill the interpretive function. He must constantly think of the various segments of his audience, not the nonexistent average. Some articles may be aimed primarily at certain segments to be most effective. A fancy presentation with color pictures may be highly desirable for an external audience and suspect to some internal audiences. The publication for a management audience calls for different content and presentation than one primarily addressed to non-management employees.

All too frequently editors use terms that are not entirely clear to the audience the publication is aimed at. Or we include professional gobbledegook terms which we use every day and which to us have a meaning, but to the lay person, who is not as closely associated with the subject at hand, they are almost a foreign language.

A West Coast beatnick who tells me, "Man, lamp the cool set of threads!" is speaking almost as alien a language as the Market Street advertising man who says he is "talking off the top of his head."

The principle of "keeping it clear" is well illustrated by the story of the Portland plumber of foreign extraction with a limited command of the English language, who wrote the National Bureau of Standards in Washington and said that he found hydrochloric acid quickly opened drainage pipes when they were clogged. He asked them if it was a good thing to use. A Bureau scientist wrote him in reply:

"The efficiency of hydrochloric acid is indisputable, but the corrosive residue is incompatible with metallic permanence."

The plumber wrote back thanking the Bureau for telling him the method was a good one. The scientist was a little disturbed and showed this correspondence to his boss, who wrote:

"We cannot assume responsibility for the production of toxic and nauseous residue from hydrochloric acid and suggest you use an alternative procedure."

Whereupon the plumber wrote back and said that he agreed with the Bureau that hydrochloric acid worked fine. Finally the top scientist, boss of the first two, broke the impasse by tearing himself loose from technical terminology. He wrote the following:

"Don't use hydrochloric acid. It eats \_\_\_\_\_ out of the pipes."

So if you would motivate your members through your cooperative internal or external publication, put your proposal in terms that they cannot fail to understand, and don't cloud the issue with technical verbiage.

Present any arguments both for and against a given proposal. You are in a much stronger position if you identify reasons opposing your suggestion and for reaching a valid conclusion, rather than if you present only your viewpoint and wait to have other people present objections which may prove far stronger than those you anticipated.

All we have been saying about the organizational newspaper could be boiled down into this four-part formula.

Part I - - Tell what you believe.

Part II - - Tell how it effects your readers.

Part III - - Tell what they should do about it.

Part IV - - Tell how they can do it.

Specialization of agriculture, just as of industry, has required more than ever before that the editor be soundly grounded in his organization and its field. The modern publication can't be edited from a desk; the successful editor has to go out among the membership to get his news.

Management is realizing more and more that you can't compete in the modern market by giving your secretary a couple of afternoons to turn out the cooperative publication with an "It's that time of the month again" attitude.

In closing, I think that what I have said today can best be summed up with the following quotation:

"What we say and how we say it is at least as important as saying it in the first place."

Be selective in the tools you use for getting your message across. Make sure your efforts are obtaining a response. When you have accomplished these goals, you know you have succeeded.

Herbert Beyers

Editors Note: Mr. Beyers, in his review of the use of membership publications to strengthen relations between regional and local associations, offered a different approach. Instead of employing a publications staff within the organization, his group farmed out the magazine, a quarterly, to outside professional agency people. In addition, they published a monthly newsletter containing market news. Both periodicals were mailed to the membership and the plants.

Commenting on readership surveys, he said the Norbest staff determined reader response in a hurry by running an obvious error. Dealing with communications between plants, he said the telephone covered this aspect of contact quite adequately.

Communication with Employees.

Walter Steele

The essence of this topic is realization of the fact that the best of member relations programs can be made more effective by better employee training and understanding.

By this I mean that if we can improve our communications with employees and train them along the lines of understanding our member relations program so that they can convey information to the members and patrons, we will achieve a great deal more success from such a program. In order to do this, employees need to understand what cooperatives are, who owns them, their operation, and the general need of cooperatives in the agriculture economy.

Employees assist in developing good relations, and the type of training, education, and motivation which helps employees sell the cooperative to the membership should be practiced at all times. The employee is constantly in contact with members and patrons in his everyday course of business, therefore, affording an excellent opportunity to communicate with the member patron.

I realize that this topic I am to discuss is communicating with employees and not communicating with member patrons. However, we must keep in mind the importance of communicating with the member to better illustrate the topic "Communicating with Employees." For a well-informed employee in turn can help a member become well informed.

We in cooperatives certainly should keep in mind the importance of telling the co-op's story to members and the general public.

What is meant by communication? To communicate is to impart, convey, to make known, report something, explain something, or persuade someone to do something.



The reason for communicating with cooperative employees is to give them certain valuable information on operating policies and procedures. We also communicate with employees to inform them of certain facts about the cooperative and of problems the cooperative faces.

There are a number of ways by which a supervisor can communicate with employees. For example, many cooperatives use employee meetings during which the employee is brought up to date on cooperative affairs.

We can also communicate with our employees by the manner in which we supervise them.

Another method of communicating with employees is through printed material of various sorts, such as a house organ or a bulletin board.

When do we communicate with employees? My answer to that question would be that we may communicate with employees daily, weekly, or perhaps monthly. The important consideration to remember is that we communicate when necessary.

The procedures of keeping employees informed and well trained are many. The informed employee can, in turn, keep the cooperative member informed. Generally the informed employee is a happy employee. This, in turn, helps develop a positive and pleasant cooperative image.

Employees can be valuable aids in building good member relations. Let's make the best possible use of this important tool.

#### Institutional Advertising As A Communications Technique In Strengthening Member Relations.

Richard J. Turner

Ralph Waldo Emerson once said: "Build a better mousetrap and the world will beat a path to your door."

I would like to explode this mousetrap theory by relating a story. Once upon a time a man built a better mousetrap and sat down and waited. Nothing happened. He was puzzled. He had built a better mousetrap. What was wrong?

He went out into the world to see what was interfering with the Path Beating Project. He consulted his friends. His mousetrap was better, he insisted, so why had they not come to get it? One said "nuts" to the idea of a new-fangled gadget for catching mice. Another protested that it was "agin" nature, which had provided cats to take care of rodents. Still another complained of the expense. The few who would listen were indifferent, skeptical. The druggist who sold rat poison proved to be downright disagreeable.



Lining up at the registration table.



Art Thomason, secretary-treasurer, Western Idaho Production Credit Association, Caldwell, left, and Helen King, director, homemakers department, Pacific Supply Cooperative, talk it over with Irwin Rust, chief, membership relations branch, Farmer Cooperative Service.



Jack Shepherd, director of public relations, Calavo Growers of California, Los Angeles, points to his "5000" chart, as other program participants look on. They are, left to right, Richard Johnsen, Jr., executive secretary, Agricultural Council of California, session chairman; Vern Tucker, president, Clark County Dairymen's Cooperative, Battle Ground, Wash., and Jack Gray, public relations manager of Frazer Valley Milk Producers Association, Vancouver, B. C. Gray also is president of the Cooperative Editors Association.



Cooperative farm credit associations of the Spokane district were represented by this group, left to right: James A. Sullivan, manager, Federal Land Bank Association, Hillsboro, Ore.; Gene Curtis, manager, Federal Land Bank Association, Boise, Idaho; Irvin Patten, secretary-treasurer, Southern Oregon Production Credit Association, Medford; Raymond S. Zapell, Assistant secretary-treasurer, Southern Oregon PCA; Art Thomason, secretary-treasurer, Western Idaho PCA, Caldwell, and Eugene L. Robinson, manager FLBA, Conrad, Mont., and secretary-treasurer, Conrad PCA.



Pacific Supply's membership relations display attracted lots of attention.



Informal conferences like this add materially to these regional get-togethers. In this circle, starting with Dick Bartram, county extension agent of Wenatchee, Wash., back to camera, are, left to right: Bob Gibbs, Northwest Wholesale, Wenatchee; A. C. Adams, president, Spokane Bank for Cooperatives; Ralph Johnson, Northwest Wholesale, and J. K. Stern, president, American Institute of Cooperation.



So he started to build the path himself, for he believed in his mouse-trap. The path was built with a powerful tool: Advertising. It is the tool industry uses to sell its wares. It is the tool that makes mass production and low unit costs possible because it is a tool for mass selling.

Advertising is also a prime tool for selling an idea or concept. It can explain and sell a company or institution to the public. For such a broad-based organization as a cooperative, it can be a potent communication tool to its own membership, keeping them informed on the cooperative, its objectives, the accomplishments, and the advantages of active membership participation.

This is institutional advertising. Many cooperatives are beginning to put this powerful communication force to work to strengthen membership relations.

How do we measure the effectiveness of this force? For a minute let's explore what it has done for other organizations. There are hundreds of examples in industry. It starts with establishing a name--an identity.

What's in a name? This was a question first posed by Shakespeare in his immortal "Romeo and Juliet."

Have you noticed that picking a name before the baby comes seems sort of an empty effort? And those of you who have children, have you noticed how soon the name takes on a bright new meaning as soon as you see the brand new babe? The name certainly has personality. It seems as if no other name could have fit so perfectly.

Company names and product names -- they, too, take on a personality as they become part and parcel of the personality of the wearer.

For example, when I mention the name of a well-known high-priced car, what thoughts come to your mind? Luxury, surely, but quality and dependability, too--qualities that have been synonyms for the general excellence this car has demonstrated over many years. And so, what is in a name? For farmer cooperatives it can mean continued growth and success. It can help corral the group force of membership behind each program, each activity. It can keep the membership solid on the cooperative. For distributing cooperatives, it can tell the quality and volume-savings story.

May I cite the example of our client, Pacific Cooperatives? A little over three years ago this progressive regional cooperative embarked upon an identification program, a program to visually unite the 122 local member associations in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho and over 100,000 farm families who are member and owners.

Before they could speak with a common voice, they decided they must have a common identity. That decision caused the birth of the sign of the "Circle P," an arresting, eye-compelling, distinctive trademark.

Member associations pledged to identify their buildings, equipment, and rolling stock with the Circle P and a majority got that job accomplished the first year.

This gave them an identity--a visual platform on which to tell their story to their membership, to prospective members and to the farm public.

And this is the story they told.

. Editor's note: At this point Mr. Turner displayed copies of the first years' advertisements.

After 2 years a recognition survey was made. It clearly indicated the sign of the Circle P was established. Over 90 percent recognized the trademark--a remarkable achievement in 2 short years. The survey also indicated there was a job to do in explaining the Pacific "family of cooperatives" concept. Farmers belong to so many different organizations it is necessary to continually remind them that if they are members of a local "Circle P" cooperative, they are also members of the Pacific family.

Here is the series of advertisements aimed at telling this story, explaining what advantages being a member of the Pacific family offers.

Editor's note: At this point Mr. Turner displayed five or six "Pacific family ads."

Institutional advertising such as this gains momentum and builds each year. It should not be considered a project but a continuing campaign through the years.

One final but very important point. Just as a salesman must sell himself and his company before he can sell his products, institutional advertising can be your greatest platform to build sales to members. It can make your product advertising more effective and it can be less costly than selling and advertising item by item. Take the chain store campaigns. X chain, for example, is the place for meat--the place for vegetables.

This chain doesn't let up on the hard-hitting produce advertising. And they shouldn't. But they have sold the public on the concept that its tremendous volume and numerous outlets means high quality, low costs and convenient, nearby shopping.

Often people think of "institutional" advertising as some nebulous way of indirectly conveying impressions. On the contrary, for industry--and for farm cooperatives--it can be one of the most powerful information and sales tools in your communications kit.

Edmund R. Barmettler

The Traditional Environment of Member Relations

In order to speak constructively about membership relations and ways to improve them, it is necessary to define the term. In seeking a definition, it soon becomes apparent that membership relations is not so much a thing as it is a condition of the organizational mind. It might be described as the psychic health of an organization, the whole of which is made up of the collective viewpoints, ideas, knowledge, understandings and misunderstandings of individual members.

Cooperative members strive for satisfactions involving political, social or economic ends. It is the benefits of belonging that attract people to become members. Membership cohesiveness, on the other hand, is probably more related to stress external to organization. If such external stresses (such as, disadvantages of not belonging) are not great enough to help cooperatives keep their members, any effort to attract people into the organization will eventually be ineffective.

Membership Objectives and the Social System

According to Loomis<sup>1/</sup>, any cooperative organization (society) is first of all a concrete interactive social structure, whose members interact more with each other than with non-members. Sociologists tell us that members of any social system have two possible types of relationships with each other. In the first (or Gemeinschaft) type membership is an end in itself. Individuals belong because they somehow receive value purely from being members. In the second (or Gesellschaft) situation membership is simply a means to an end.

While both types of relationships exist within a cooperative, the second type appears to be more common. This is particularly true where membership's objective is economic power. Nevertheless, both are important concepts in solving membership relations problems.

Survival in a Changing Environment

Since the two types of relationship cited are operative in cooperatives, those responsible for strengthening membership relations must learn to recognize them. To do otherwise is to disregard potentially useful tools.

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<sup>1/</sup>Loomis, Charles P., and J. Allen Beagle, Rural Sociology - The Strategy of Change, Prentice-Hall, Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1957, p. 1.



Rust<sup>2/</sup> points out in a paper that, "without strong member support, the high priced talent, impressive facade, or well-filled coffers are of little use." Rust also points out that, "In major respect the farmer differs little from his city brother. He may rely on his cooperative for production supplies, specialized services, and markets. We hope he does. But he relies on outside resources for social outlets." That farmers are becoming business oriented will cause them to look to their cooperatives for business leadership, rather than social outlet.

In the future the person responsible for developing desirable membership relations may find his efforts meeting competition from many sides. He may, because of modern developments in transportation and communication, reach his audience more easily, but at the same time be less effective because of the many pressures upon his subject from many sources.

What recourse does the membership relations man have? How can he attract and keep the interest and support of farmer members? Perhaps his most important task will be to help the members define and develop common objectives. Objectives may change with time, but it is of major importance that members have similar objective values.

### Adjustment and Change

Cooperatives are constantly subject to the pressure of change, and we are all aware of this pressure. We can see it in our membership number, in sales, in attendance at annual meetings, in the viewpoints expressed by members of our boards of directors, in member attitudes. For each change there is some motivating force. This motivating force may be initiated by leadership within the cooperative, or by some action far removed from the cooperative itself (example: the effect of support prices). It may be within the local community in which the cooperative is organized (example: the use of bulk milk tanks in place of the 10-gallon can).

The problem faced by a cooperative is how to adjust to this pressure. Few organizations are willing to accept the idea that their worth in the community is lessening. A more common viewpoint will be, "Let's do something to improve our position." For most cooperatives, to improve position means either an increase in number of members, or an increase in per capita volume of business.

### Communication --- The Tool For Adjustment

The membership relations man has one basic tool for bringing about adjustments. The tool is communication.

Communication within a farmer cooperative is the process by which decisions, directives, and information reach all the people concerned with the cooperative. Successful communication means that the individuals so

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<sup>2/</sup>Rust, Irwin W., "Cooperative Membership Relations-Foundations, Forecast, and Challenge," Yearbook, American Institute of Cooperation, 1616 H. Street, N. W. Washington, D. C, 1960, pp. 515-528.

concerned become willing to make desirable adjustments in light of what has been communicated. In terms of cooperatives, it may mean a number of things, the most important being active support.

The membership relations man has two time periods to consider--first he must deal with those things immediate (short-run, keep members informed of day-to-day concerns) and second, things more distant (long-run, education of members and potential members, including factual information and new understanding, new values and ideals.)

### The Role of Research and Extension

The member relations man has at his disposal a large staff of research and extension specialists. Both groups have a role to play.

The role of research specialists in our educational and research institutions is to facilitate the process of change through research.

The role of extension in our educational and research institutions is to bring research findings to individuals and groups who can use them, including members of our cooperatives. A number of methods are used. Generally, the same communication media are employed as are available to the membership relations man.

### Publications

Research institutions depend upon publications to report research findings. These publications are generally available to all who can make use of them. They can be obtained at a nominal cost and are often free.

It seems to me that the real value of university publications is their unbiased reporting of research results. Universities and their Experiment Stations are dedicated to the concept that researchers must be free to seek the truth for its own sake. The reports of such research may contain elements useful for making proposed action acceptable and thereby may make it less difficult to bring about needed adjustment by both members as individuals and the cooperative as a whole.

### Using Research Publications and Specialists in Member Relations Work

Membership relations officers can obtain the latest information from their Experiment Stations and Extension Services. These findings can be, and have been, used in membership relations work.

Cooperative organizations have and will carry on some research on their own. Similarly cooperatives have influenced universities in the area of research work.

Success in modern farming depends on ability to adapt new developments to the farming operation, and willingness to make changes. That is an area where cooperatives can do great good and receive great benefits from using college publications.



Those who gain the most from an advance in technology are those who adopt it early enough so that the comparative advantages between the old and the new methods are realized before the practice becomes generally used. If our organizations are the type where economic benefit is the goal of membership, then early awareness and dissemination of research by membership relations personnel will help members reap the benefits of their membership. Experiment Station and Extension Service publications also provide an excellent source of news items, feature stories, and news-feature articles for cooperative publications. Many ideas for improved farming practices are planted by short news items that appear in newspapers or are heard on radio and television. However, there is not enough information in these items to tell the farmer how to effect the changes. When such news appears to hold promise for members, cooperatives can provide a service by supplying the additional information the member needs.

As agricultural leaders we have access to research and other information sooner than most of our members. We also receive information relative to new research and new developments that our members may never hear about. Here again is an opportunity to provide a service by calling this information to our members' attention.

Use of Extension publications permits use of the "rifle" approach. This appeals particularly to the member who is interested in specific information directed at a real objective rather than the "shot-gun" approach with a multitude of vague solutions aimed in the general direction of economic objectives.

You may say at this point, "What Barmettler is talking about is cooperative education," and you are correct. Membership relations work is an educational process.

### Improving Member Relations in Farmer Cooperatives--The Challenge of the Sixties.

Irwin Rust

What is the most important single factor in successful cooperative endeavor? Is it the possession of unlimited funds? Is it ownership of impressive facilities? Is it the employment of highly trained management?

I think not.

I submit to you that the most important factor in the success of our cooperatives is the strength of the bond between cooperatives and members, the degree to which member-patrons feel a sense of ownership of, and responsibility to, their cooperative. The most important factor, in other words, is good membership relations. Without strong member support, the high priced talent, impressive facade, or well-filled coffers are of little use.



There was a time when strong ties between members and their cooperative were readily achieved. The first written record of a farmer cooperative describes the organization of a baby-sitting association by a group of Chinese female farm hands. These busy women were constantly having to stop work to tend to their newest baby, brought to the field and propped against a nearby tree. To save time, they put all the youngsters under a shade tree, and the mothers would take turns watching them. Direct communication in this cooperative was easily maintained. Any association problems were instantly made known in a chorus of wails, and association members could step in and clear up the situation.

Group activities in our early American colonies were also good examples of cooperative action where strong ties were easy to maintain. The husking bee was a well-used method of helping with the harvest. Barn raisings, where neighbors joined to help raise the ridge pole of a new barn, were common occurrences. Through such group action these early settlers found both social and economic satisfaction.

Here again direct, effective communication tying member to group was possible. For example, if the ridge pole happened to drop on someone's foot, there would be an instant and specific response signifying temporary member dissatisfaction with the organization's program.

In the early days of our more formalized American cooperatives, members learned about their association by actually taking part in its affairs and functions. But more recently, as cooperatives have become more specialized, and as they grow in size and variety of services offered, much of the actual operation is delegated to employed personnel. Thus, intimate knowledge of cooperative affairs now tends to be confined to those members having the opportunity to act in some official capacity, such as serving on the board of directors. The rank and file member feels less involved in his association. Effective communication becomes more difficult.

Along with this trend toward reduced opportunity for communication between cooperatives and their members has come an increasing demand on members' time and interest from other segments of the economy. Direct participation of the farmer member has ceased to be necessary in the day-to-day functions of the cooperative. The cooperative in turn is no longer a source of social outlet for its members.

All these changes have made it increasingly difficult to maintain a feeling of warm, close, personal relationship between cooperatives and their members. But at the same time need for it has become more and more imperative, for experience has taught us that the informed--and involved--member is the loyal member. And loyal members in turn are the foundation of strong, healthy, cooperatives.

Progressive and far-sighted cooperative leaders have recognized both the difficulty and the necessity of keeping members well informed, and over the years have developed various methods of membership education. For the purposes of this discussion I have grouped these methods under three main headings: (1) Meetings; (2) personal contacts; and (3) printed material and audio-visual aids.

Under the heading of meetings we can include such events as annual member meetings, local or district member meetings, and board meetings.

At the annual meeting members learn about their cooperative as they hear key employees give an accounting of their stewardship for the preceding year in the form of annual reports. These annual meetings give members an opportunity to review association policies and to ask questions.

Local or district meetings are a feature of the member education program of many large cooperatives. At these meetings members may meet with cooperative staff personnel to be briefed on cooperative affairs.

Board meetings, of necessity largely restricted to directors, give board members an opportunity to learn of the more technical details of the organization and operation of their association.

A second main method of membership education is personal contacts. These are particularly effective means of membership education--especially if there is deliberate planning to that end. Such contacts may be between members and employees, members and directors, or even members and other members. They may occur in the cooperative office, on the member's farm, on the street, at any gathering where cooperative members and staff are apt to meet. Worthwhile contacts may occur during certain special events, such as an educational tour or speaking contest sponsored by the cooperative.

A third method of cooperative membership education is the use of printed materials and audio-visual aids. Among the most widely used of these are the printed annual report, periodic magazines or newsletters, newspaper stories, radio and television programs, institutional advertising, and posters and charts. A particular advantage of printed materials is that they can be studied at leisure. A disadvantage might be that they are easily discarded. You can look a man in the eye and force him to listen. But the same man reading his mail in the privacy of his home can't be forced to read if he doesn't want to.

With so many alternatives, a cooperative planning a member education program must devote most of its attention and funds to those methods which have proved their worth in communicating most effectively. But how do we know which methods are the best? In an attempt to measure relative effectiveness of the most commonly used methods, the Membership Relations Branch of Farmer Cooperative Service made a survey in 1950 of 2,750 cooperative members.

These 2,750 persons were all members of a large federated cooperative widely noted for its intensive membership relations program. Those surveyed were asked to rank in order of effectiveness seven educational devices most commonly used by their cooperative. Here are the results of that survey.



## Relative Effectiveness of Seven Methods of Membership Education

### Member ranking

1. Cooperative periodicals
2. Personal contacts
3. Circular letters
4. Annual reports
5. Annual meeting
6. Educational exhibits
7. Radio programs

Those were evaluations back in 1950. How do they compare with member evaluations today? A study just being completed by our Membership Relations Branch sheds some light. This was a study of communication processes in a large local association in an eastern State.

Here are some of the results of that study. They bear out results of the 1950 member study.

1. Cooperative periodical: 98 percent of the members contacted reported reading part to all of the cooperative periodical.
2. Personal contacts:
  - a. 83 percent saw the manager at least once a year.
  - b. 72 percent came in contact at least once a month with some cooperative employee.
  - c. 55 percent reported contacting directors about their associations.
3. Annual meeting: Average attendance at the annual meeting, according to association records, was 15 percent of eligible members. --But, 55 percent of those questioned had never attended an annual meeting.

Again it appears that the most effective channels for communicating with members are (1) printed material such as a monthly magazine; and (2) personal contacts.

Now just what is the significance of these statistics to you as leaders in your cooperatives? Simply this:

Effective membership education calls for understanding that education is a continuing process. Many cooperatives today are aware of this, and have set up member education programs as a departmental activity. But many others, equally aware of the need, have been unable to finance a separate member relations department. While the full-time attention of one or more staff members is desirable, it is still possible for a cooperative without such help to have an effective member education program if management -- directors and manager -- will take the necessary steps to make the best use of the means available.



It is clear to all of us that in building a sound program of cooperative membership education we must know what methods are most effective in reaching members and capturing their attention. But in addition, our program must be a continuing effort. And above all, our program should reflect a thorough understanding of the basic principles of communication.

Now let's dig a little deeper into our problem and analyze just what goes on in a program of member education. To help us in the analysis let's speak for a moment in abstract terms. Using these terms, we see that there are three major phases in any membership relations program:

1. First, we project (send) some form of communication. If our communication is successful, it results in
2. Motivation -- the creation in the member (receiver) of a desire for
3. Action, participation -- in the total program of the cooperative. Ideally this participation consists of both patronage and sharing in cooperative activities.

Note that communication is the first and key step and that some form of action is the desired end product. But immediately two questions arise: (1) What shall we communicate?; and (2) How shall we communicate it?

Let's list a few items in answer to the first question: What shall we communicate? Without implying that the list is all-inclusive, it seems to me that cooperative members will want to know about: --

The cooperative -- its background, objectives, organization, and general operation. What products does it handle? Where do they come from? Where do they go?

Cooperative policies -- especially the reason for adopting new policies, or changing old practices, and how policies affect themselves and their fellow members.

Cooperative plans -- involving such things as changes in methods, equipment, services offered.

The outlook -- for business and agriculture in general, and for their product in particular.

Cooperative finances -- about revenues or losses -- about plans for the future, such as development of new methods of procurement, or marketing -- about development of new products.

We can sum it all up by saying that cooperative members are entitled to full information on all cooperative activities. This includes both the good news and the bad news.

The second question -- How shall we communicate? -- requires more extended discussion.

To begin with, for purposes of this talk, let's define the act of communication as an exchange of ideas, opinions, or impressions. This exchange

of ideas can take place through one or more of several communication channels. For example, we may exchange ideas through:

1. Speech -- spoken or written.
2. Sight -- pictures or other visual impressions.
3. Activities -- such as the day-to-day operations of your cooperative.
4. Attitudes -- expressed by the manner in which your cooperative performs services.

In our definition of communication we referred to "an exchange of ideas --." But for an exchange to take place, there must be at least two parties to the communication act -- a sender and a receiver. Equally important is the requirement that the sender and the receiver be in tune, so that what goes in at one end of the communication channel comes out the same at the other.

We can use color television to illustrate this point. In order to receive a color television broadcast we need a color set. If we have a set capable of receiving only black and white, then all we get is a black and white picture. Something of what has been broadcast is lost in the receiving process.

In the same way human beings sometimes fail to receive the whole message. Let's examine for the next few minutes some of the ways in which humans can be out of tune with each other. We can call them barriers to effective communication. If we learn to recognize these barriers to effective communication, we can improve our communication by taking steps to eliminate the barriers. In doing so we also eliminate the danger that our communication may stimulate undesirable, rather than desirable, action.

WE CAN'T STOP COMMUNICATING. The first step in eliminating communication barriers is to cultivate an awareness that we are communicating all the time, whether or not we intend to. For example, you have all probably had the experience of going into a store and waiting while the clerks finished some bit of idle gossip before waiting on you. I suspect that your reaction was something like this: "If they don't need my business any more than this, I'll go somewhere else." The clerk's attitude of indifference has communicated to you. And your action, from the point of view of the store, was highly undesirable. You stopped patronizing it.

Or, consider the communication potential inherent in visual impressions. If you have a choice between two business firms, one of them shoddy and run-down in appearance while the other is immaculate, you are apt to patronize the one with the better appearance. Both have communicated to you visually, and you have reacted to both messages.

How can you make the best use of involuntary communicating? Simply by being everlastingly aware that it is going on, and by guiding yourself and your cooperative accordingly.



WHAT DID HE MEAN BY THAT? Identical words can have different meanings for different people. This fact makes it particularly hazardous to describe something to someone else. In spoken communication the problem can be avoided by requiring the listener to rephrase the description in his own words and repeat them back to the sender. In this manner two-way communication is achieved. But with written communication, there is no such possibility. Thus it is doubly important to weigh our words carefully when communicating in writing.

As an example, a recent experiment in communication conducted by Bell Telephone Laboratories called for two persons sitting in separate rooms connected by telephone to properly place a number of dominoes on a sheet of paper. Mr. A had a drawing showing proper placement of the dominoes; Mr. B had a sheet of paper and the dominoes. A's task was to tell B over the telephone how he wanted the dominoes placed on the paper.

In one variation of the experiment the telephone connection was one-way: B could listen but not talk.

In another variation both A and B were allowed to converse at will with each other.

The one-way experiment was a failure. Of 20 pairs of men, not one completed the job successfully. The two-way system, on the other hand, was a complete success, with the job accomplished in less than 20 minutes. Further, players in the two-way experiment felt that their results were correct, and that their partner was a good man to work with.

How can you meet this problem of multiple meanings? If you are on the receiving end, look for meanings in the person using them, not just in the words themselves. If you are on the sending end, consider the nature of the audience you are trying to influence.

THINGS AREN'T ALWAYS WHAT THEY SEEM. Subjective inference--what we think is a fact --can sometimes be mistaken for what is really the true fact. Now it is necessary at times to act on an incomplete set of facts. This involves risk. But risk should be taken only when the possible loss from taking the risk is less than the cost of collecting enough additional facts to reduce or eliminate the risk.

For example, I heard of a fruit grower whose crop had ripened to the point where harvesting it was imperative if he was to avoid loss. He arranged with his cooperative to send a picking crew the following morning. To his surprise the next morning he saw the crew he thought he had been promised heading down the highway in another direction. Assuming there would be further costly delay, the grower called up a cash buyer and sold his crop for immediate picking, thus breaking his contract with his association and making himself automatically liable for breach of contract suit.

The tragedy was that his cooperative manager, knowing of his ripening crop, had engaged another, better picking crew--which arrived a few minutes too late



late. A simple phone call by the grower would have provided the necessary additional facts to eliminate the risk-taking action.

How can you reduce the risk of unwarranted action? Avoid action based on inference--strive not to motivate such action in others.

CASE HARDENING. We tend to deal with the similarities between facts, and human beings, without paying due respect to their differences. We speak of "farmers," rather than "farmer A," "farmer B," and so on, forgetting that the simple qualification for membership in such a group is only one of the countless factors peculiar to each individual in the group. An example of this type of barrier to good communication is such a frequently heard sweeping generalization as: "All women are poor drivers; all red-heads are hot tempered; or all artists are impractical dreamers." The danger lies in acting on the basis of an arbitrary rigid classification without conceding the possibility that the differences might far outweigh the similarities.

An example which illustrates this point is the problem encountered by the manager of a local grain marketing cooperative. Harvesting had been delayed due to prolonged rain. A number of members asked the manager to keep the elevator open every day including Sunday until the harvest had been completed.

Thinking to help his members complete their harvest before crops began to spoil, this manager announced that until the crop was all in, the elevator would be open for business every day, including Sunday. To the manager's dismay, many of his members protested the action as a violation of the Sabbath. His mistake was to assume that all farmers put the harvest ahead of every other consideration at harvest time.

How can you avoid the dangers of overly rigid classification? Remember that no two objects, and certainly no two humans, are identical--they differ from each other in myriad ways.

BEWARE OF THE "EITHER-OR" TRAP. Another potential block to the effective communication so vital to a good member relations program is our common tendency to think in absolute, rather than relative terms. Perhaps a better way to express this idea is to say that we are prone to think that things are either all black or all white--are either all good or all bad --are either all wrong or all right.

In some cases it is true that there is no middle ground--no gray area. But in other cases it is possible to have a wide range of possible positions between two extremes. For example, the statement, "You either paid your cooperative membership fee or you did not," involves contradictory elements only one of which can be true. But on the other hand, "you either believe in cooperatives or you do not," contains two contrary positions between which lie many degrees of belief. You may favor marketing cooperatives but not service cooperatives. Or, you may favor all farmer cooperatives but feel wary of voluntary food chains.

How can you avoid taking an arbitrary stand? Look for the possible gray areas when tempted to communicate in terms of black or white--for the middle ground between two apparently opposite positions or points of view.

ONE-WAY VISION. One way vision is a rather common human frailty that can stifle progress, waste time --and even cost a lot of money. For almost any problem situation, there is more than one solution. But probably all of us at one time or another have been afflicted with this particular communication barrier.

As an example, the manager of a local supply cooperative in a nearby State recently told me he was losing patronage to competitors who gave trading stamps. The manager viewed the situation as a problem with but one solution--the cooperative must also give trading stamps.

This troubled manager was suffering from one-way vision--he saw only one obvious solution.

But seen from another point of view, the trading stamp situation presents an ideal opportunity for the cooperative to help its members re-examine the whole fabric of cooperative principles and practices--particularly the principle of operating at cost, with any excess of revenue over expenses returned to patrons in cash or otherwise at the close of each year. One-way vision had blinded this manager to the fact that his problem was really an opportunity for strengthening member understanding of cooperatives.

How can you avoid being short-circuited by the quick answer? Be suspicious of your judgment whenever a problem appears to have just one obvious solution.

THE SHORT FUSE. Have you ever blown your top over an aggravating situation, only to find later that your reaction was not justified? All of us have at one time or another. But some folks seem to have a permanent short fuse. The unfortunate thing is that they may act so fast when irked that their brain never has time to consider the effects of their action. Communicating with such people is a touchy matter, for we never know what might trigger an explosion.

For example, the manager of a fruit marketing cooperative, under some pressure to finish the harvest before trees began to shed their crop, received a call from a large--and touchy--grower. The following conversation ensued:

Grower: "I'll be ready for your picking crew in the morning. Be sure to send Harry to run the crew. He's picked this place 10 years running, and knows what I want."

Manager: "I can't send Harry this time. He's working in another orchard--."

But the manager never finished his sentence. The grower slammed down the phone, walked over to his desk, and filled out a withdrawal notice severing his membership in the cooperative.



What happened? The grower didn't take time to think. And failure to take time to think is a common--and often expensive--cause of communication failure.

There are two basic ways in which people react to stimuli--that is, in the broadest sense, to communication.

In the case of sudden emergency, such as a child running in front of your car, the reaction is reflexive, unthinking, and immediate. You slam on your brakes.

In normal, non-emergency situations, the reaction is reflective. The brain sorts sensory impressions, correlates them with stored memories, and weighs alternative courses of action. This all takes time. But occasionally we see emergencies that aren't really emergencies, especially when we are under pressure. In such instances, we need to be on our guard when attempting to communicate.

How can you cope with the problem of the short fuse? Even though you yourself never react without thinking--never blow your top--remember to make allowances for those who do. 1/

Thus we see that communication takes many forms. And we sometimes communicate without meaning to. The major purpose in communicating with others is to stimulate some desired action. But certain barriers to effective communication can inhibit action--or worse, can stimulate undesirable or ill-considered action.

Effective communication is a difficult but rewarding art. But it can be learned. The success of any program of cooperative member education--membership relations--depends on your success in mastering the art, and in applying the principles to all situations in which communication takes place--in which ideas or impressions are exchanged.

In conclusion, let's try to forecast what the future may hold in the way of new problems, and new opportunities, particularly for those of us who are concerned with strengthening cooperative membership relations.

We know that farm population is shrinking, that the number of farms is dropping, that the size of farms is growing.

We know that the number of farmer cooperatives has been declining. Cooperative share of total agricultural business has held fairly constant, however, which means that individual cooperatives, like other businesses, are growing in size.

Do these developments mean that the farmer himself, the cooperative member-patron, is changing?

I believe that probably it does mean just that. The late Vernon Vine, former Director of Editorial Relations for the Farm Journal, put it this way:

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1/ An excellent discussion of communication barriers is contained in "How To Say What You Mean," by Robert Froman, Nations Business, May 1957.



"---we probably are safe in assuming that increasingly the member we are dealing with has joined the association well after its founding; that he played no part in its early struggles; that he has, therefore, no emotional involvement with it; and that he belongs to the organization mainly for commercial reasons arrived at through rational intellectual processes rather than because of any deep-seated economic or social philosophy.

"By this line of reasoning, the challenge to the cooperative's member relations program in the future is to find some way of cracking this hard commercial shell and then providing the member with a rationale for membership participation that will fit his kind of business and social thinking."

"Obviously, what we need now is to thread our way between these extremes of sentimentality and materialism, picking our way along the hard, if narrow, ground of truth until it brings us to a sound basis for a successful membership participation program.

"But participation, perhaps in program development, is not enough." And the writer concluded: "The intangibles--the sense of belonging, of sharing, of having an effective voice--these are the vitamins that keep the cooperative body strong and vigorous."

And he might have added that it is these intangibles that set cooperatives apart from other types of business organizations. I have often thought, in considering the real difference between cooperatives and other forms of business, that a proprietary firm is essentially two-dimensional--a thing of debits and credits, of profits and losses. A cooperative, on the other hand, has another dimension--people working together. A cooperative can be a warm, living, three-dimensional being, something to be proud of. It is your task, those of you who are working with and for farmer cooperatives, to help your members capture and cherish a feeling of pride in their association, a rebirth of belief in the aims and philosophy of cooperative endeavor.

The foundation of your cooperatives is a strong, loyal participating membership.

The forecast for your cooperatives is a period of change, of testing, of growth.

The challenge to you and to your cooperatives is to find ways to operate effectively in today's market place while maintaining the fundamental virtues which set cooperatives apart--and to instill in members an awareness of those virtues, a sense of pride of ownership of an organization so uniquely endowed.



## SESSION III

Friday February 24, 1961  
Chairman: Richard Johnsen, Jr.

### GOOD MEMBER<sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub>RELATIONS

#### Reflections on the Elements of a Good Member Relations Program

Jack Shepherd

I've decided to re-title my talk to "Echoes of Yesterday!"

Practically everything I have to say to you has been said by others. It has been said time after time over a period of years. Perhaps there is nothing new to say.

Perhaps the best resolution we can take from here is the resolution to put into practice the things we already know.

Before we get to the business of reflecting on the elements of a good member relations program, let's be sure what we're reflecting about.

What, for instance, do we mean by "a good member relations program"?

What, for that matter, do we mean by "member relations"? And what are we hoping to do about them with the program we're reflecting upon?

Is the purpose of our program to "put out fires"? Or is its purpose "fire prevention"? Are we hoping a member relations program will convince the membership that we're doing a fine job -- when perhaps we really aren't? Or are we trying to develop a true understanding among the members of what their cooperative really is (and what it is not) -- what it really means to them -- how it can serve them best -- what their obligations and responsibilities are?

Are we trying to ease up the pressure on others in management by wrapping member relations into a neat little "package" to be handled separately from all other functions? Or are we considering a program that puts everyone in the picture -- and keeps them there -- and tells them why?

For the moment, these questions can be set aside unanswered -- though each of us will have to answer them eventually, and many more. I am simply suggesting that there must be a reason for having a program. It must have a purpose. It must answer some need, no matter what that need may be.



The first component of a good member relations program, I submit, is to establish its purpose.

The second component is to set the objectives of the program, once the purpose has been established.

What do we want the program to achieve? The goals can be increased membership, or greater participation by members, or a better informed membership, or something else. The important thing is to decide just what it is we are trying to accomplish -- specifically -- definitely. Then, every development of the program can be directed toward the objectives.

I think the goals of the program should be in writing, and in the hands of everyone who will be involved in its achievement. They should be clearly understood by all, and must be agreed to by all as desirable. They should be reviewed periodically to keep everyone on the beam, and for modification in the light of changing conditions. Modification, however, does not mean completely changing direction every time someone has a different idea. It means, instead, the recognition of the evolutionary developments that will occur in any long-range, living concept.

We have a purpose and goals as components of the program. Next is a realistic appraisal of the "product," so to speak, that we want to "sell". What are its merits? What have we to offer the members of value to them? Why should anyone be a member in the first place? Is our cooperative performing the function or service for which it exists?

Look at the other side of the picture, too, since this is a realistic appraisal. What is the cooperative not doing -- perhaps, what is there that the cooperative can't do? What do competitors have to offer that we must overcome?

The third component of a good member relations program, let us say, is acceptable overall performance by the cooperative. It could as well be listed first, because no amount of publicity or propaganda -- no matter how skillful -- will produce lasting good member relations by portraying unsatisfactory performance as satisfactory. Sooner or later, the facts will out -- and the battle will be lost. This is one reason, among others, that we cannot "package" member relations as something separate from all other aspects of the business.

Money is a component of a good member relations program -- enough of it to do the job completely, and right. We've established what we mean to accomplish; now we must determine the cost of getting to the goals. We need to set up a sound, wisely-constructed budget. It may be small, or it may be large. The size and nature of the job to be done will determine which, but an under-financed program can only look forward to less than full success.

We must have staff to implement the program. Every employee who comes into contact with the members, directly or indirectly -- every member of the board of directors -- is part of the staff in a sense, and will come into the program one way or another. I'm referring more particularly, though,

to staff responsible for the organization and development of the specific program. This may be one person (or even part of one person), or it may include a number of individuals operating as a special department. Size of the organization and magnitude of the program are the governing factors here. The point is simply that the member relations program must be somebody's assigned responsibility -- and that somebody must have the freedom and the authority to produce results under an approved program.

There must be a plan. We should determine in advance -- and as a matter of record -- what we expect to do, who will do it, and when it will be done. This is our road map on the journey toward our objectives. It should be adhered to as closely as possible. Detours will delay us. They may even take us so far off the road we will never reach the objectives. The plan should be flexible, however, there may be a better road than the one first selected -- there may be a better way to get where we want to be.

Ultimately, of course, we need "tools"-- the specific components of the program by which we will fashion the end result. These, I want to consider with you in some detail. There are many more "tools" available than we have time to discuss, but some seem to me of special importance. Basically, every one of them is a method of communication. This is entirely logical, because member relations is essentially a function of communication, or the lack of it.

There is a great hazard in thinking about communication with the membership as something uniform in nature -- that all we have to do is put out more bulletins, hold more meetings, run more ads, or what have you. The membership is composed of individuals. It is not a mass audience with each member cast in the same mold. Just as in any group, our members have varying needs, wants, attitudes, thought processes, and personal objectives. We can't reach them all in the same way. They won't all respond alike to what we say or do. We must not fall into the trap of believing we have developed communication solely by increasing the output of our words. As William H. Whyte, Jr. -- author of the book Is Anybody Listening?-- has put it: "The great enemy of communication is the illusion of it." What I am suggesting is that our communications efforts should be in the greatest possible variety of media, should be flexible, and should be as personal as they can be -- all for the purpose of recognizing that people are different.

Let me emphasize this point of difference further by identifying some of the classes of people we want to impress with what we have to say -- all of them being objects of our member relations program -- all of them. Here are nine distinct audiences to be considered: Men, women, children, members, non-members, opinion influencers, community leaders, directors, employees. Sure, some of these overlap, but there are still nine different basic interests involved -- nine different reactions to what you say. Actually, there are many more than nine--there are as many as there are people.



Now, I'm not actually concerned with what you should say to each of these audiences, and I don't propose to discuss what information you should give them. I'm going to suggest, instead, some of the means of presenting it -- the tools, the component media of communication.

Personal, face-to-face contact, in my opinion, is the best possible way to develop good member relations -- on a one-by-one basis. Here you get two-way communication -- an opportunity to come to a point of agreement. Obviously, this is a limited (and probably expensive) means of communicating, especially with a large membership. Nevertheless, personal contact by well-informed representatives of the cooperative is a component of the greatest importance.

Personal contacts can range from the regular calls by fieldmen or service representatives, to a scheduled program of visits by directors and other top management personnel, to house calls by teams of members trained for the purpose. I do not believe, however, that members can or should be depended upon to do the communicating in behalf of the organization. This is a specialist's job. It should be done by directors and employees whose primary responsibility is the development of good member relations.

The advantages of personal contact partially exist, also, in group meetings. Partially. We have a captive audience. We can squelch rumors and misinformation in person, more effectively than through the printed word. We can develop some degree of participation and some degree of two-way communication. Meetings are an important component of the member relations program -- if well employed.

Most cooperatives hold annual meetings. They should be used to their fullest potential for developing member relations. I do not agree, however, with those who put annual meetings at the top of the list for that purpose. Those who attend frequently come for a free meal, and they are usually already on our side. (If they aren't, they'll likely sneak out before the speeches start.) In any event, annual meetings are too infrequent to keep the members fully and currently informed. But we should exploit their value, regardless.

Smaller, frequently held meetings of discussion-group size can be valuable. They should be "controlled," in the sense that a local director, a key employee, or a well-informed, dependable member should lead the discussions. Such meetings should have a purpose and planned agenda that will lead toward accomplishing the objectives of the member relations program. They should not be allowed to usurp the field of policy-making, lest they assume the role of the board of directors. This can happen very easily.

General meetings are another effective component of the member relations program, if planned with a purpose.

An exceptionally fine use of meetings for development of improved member relations is the growers' conference program of Sunkist Growers, Inc. In brief, this involves a 2 or 3 day meeting of selected young husband and wife member teams from various areas to become acquainted with each other and their cooperative. Attendance runs from 100 to 200. Top management



people conduct small, fast-moving classes covering every aspect of the organization and its business. Each class moves to a new "classroom" several times during the day. All come together for an evening of general talk and entertainment.

Meetings, then, are an important component of a good member relations program. The use of printed communications provides still others.

The most valuable of the present communications, I think, is a regular publication to the members, issued with reasonable frequency. This can be a magazine, a newspaper, a newsletter. It can be a simple mimeograph job or a professional slick-paper work of art.

I happen to favor a relatively simple newsletter, devoted primarily to news directly relating to our own industry and cooperative. General farm news can well be left to general farm publications. I suggest, also, that a publication of 2 to 4 pages is more likely to be read than a larger publication that will be set aside for reading when there's more time. There never is. Incidentally, we mail our newsletter to non-members, as well as members.

Proper employment of the news release is another component. If done right, the news release multiplies our own communications output many times over. This is one of the least costly, most effective means of communication available to us.

We can advertise in the papers where members or potential members are. Advertising should be employed with care, to be effective. Every ad should be written with the individual in mind. It should say something worth saying, and say it convincingly. It should be planned in advance to be part of the program leading toward the ultimate objectives.

Advertising is relatively expensive, but its cost can be kept reasonable by reducing space size and publication frequency. If the area of membership is large and is served by several papers, it may be desirable to select the key paper for a campaign, and buy reprints of the ad for direct mailing to the members. This technique almost assures readership.

"Letters to the editor" columns of newspapers can be used as part of the program, on occasion. Issues and viewpoints can be presented, and misinformation corrected, by letters submitted by members informed of the facts. This should not be overdone, and the privilege of newspaper space must not be abused. Nevertheless, this idea can be used to advantage.

A possible component of a member relations program involves the use of other publications than our own. There are about 4,000 house organs published in this country, and most of the editors are hungry for good material. With some thought and imagination, most of us are in a position to develop a good story about some phase of our cooperative for publication in one of these 4,000 house organs. The story can be reprinted at small cost for mailing to the membership--and to customers, for added value.

Radio and television are available to us, and can well be made components of our program of member relations. Farm reporters will use appropriate material supplied for broadcast or telecast. Interviews with interesting or prominent members or executives of the cooperative can be arranged. These things cost little but time. A more elaborate, more expensive employment of these media involves the purchase of time -- and may well be worth it.

As an experiment, my own organization, last year, purchased a 15-minute Saturday noon segment of an existing popular farm program on a major Los Angeles radio station for 13 weeks. The program was re-titled "Calavo News on the Air." Content of the 15-minute weekly program was designed to interest first the growers of avocados; second, other farmers; and third, the general public. The show was a successful component of our member relations program. Circumstances prevented continuation of it for the time being, but the project will be considered again in the future.

The use of films is a component to consider. Films are comparatively expensive, and their use is somewhat limited. Nevertheless, a good film can have multiple use, both in member relations and for other purposes. If you can afford it, include film in your kit of tools. Or, at least, film strips or slide presentations.

I believe a complete member relations program should include a program for the women among the membership -- the forgotten half. Women have a profound influence. It can be for good or ill, according to how it is channelled. My own experience with a women's program is new -- California cooperatives have done little in this field, and pioneering has been necessary. Frankly, we've not yet had the success anticipated. We have not yet found the right formula, but I'm certain there is one.

The "grapevine" is the most important tool of communication. It operates in spite of anything we can do. There are ways to use the "grapevine," however, -- to keep it under control. This can be done by good "cultural" practices that I must leave it to your imagination to devise.

The list of components is not exhausted, and I don't want you to be. Let me wind up with a list of a few more, quickly. We can add the potential of service clubs, the development of youth programs, the development of community leaders and merchants as exponents of our cooperatives. We can add employee training programs and participation in community activities. We can add farm signs identifying members and car bumper stickers for the same purpose. We can add informational booklets and billboards and contests and many other things. The list of devices and methods of communication we can use is limited only by funds and imagination.

So to recap --

The components of a good member relations program are these, at least:

1. Determination of purpose
2. Setting of goals
3. Appraisal of what we have to offer
4. Budgeting
5. Staffing
6. Development of a plan
7. Implementation of the program through every available device and method.

The main component, however, is simply to get started if you haven't and to multiply your efforts if you have started -- and keep everlastingly at it. The job is never finished. This is one job that can never be done by pushing a button. It takes hard work--never ending work--but its worth it.

#### Reflections on Elements of a Member Relations Program - A Member's Viewpoint

Vern Tucker

When I was asked to speak on this subject, I was somewhat at a loss to know just what such a lengthy title really meant. Then I recalled that our cooperatives are often spoken of as a big family. That would account for the "Relations" part of the title. "Reflections," of course, means seeing yourself as you really are. "Elements" would denote the composition of something. "Program" is a course or outline of procedure. So, boiling it all down, I came up with this simple title:  
"How To Get Along with Your Kinfolks."

Two other little details sort of bothered me, too. As I am both a member and a director of our association, some of my ideas are bound to be from a director's viewpoint. The other conflict is that member relations and public relations are so closely interwoven that I shall probably be talking about both.

To show that I am truly cooperative, I will give a lot of the credit for my remarks today to the good people who helped and inspired me. These were Bruce Strachan, Organization and Relations Counselor for the Pacific Supply Co-op, and his good wife, and Arnold Robison, able manager of the Clark County Dairymen's Co-op, and his wife.

If in my remarks, I refer frequently to "me" and "our" it is because I know "me" better than I know anyone else and that I am associated with "our" more than I am with "your."



There are about 10 million American families affiliated with about 10,000 co-ops of one kind or another, yet we do less total business than General Motors Corporation alone. Many families are members of several cooperatives. Still, when we stop to think of the magnitude of business transacted by such a percentage of our population, our first thought is, "Boy, are we good. We know and practice real cooperation.

But, do we? Let's back off and take a good look at ourselves as cooperators. It is true that our motives are sound; our intentions are good. We want to improve conditions and the economic status of the urban dweller as well as of those who live in the country. We are sincere in boosting cooperative organizations and in urging others to join with us. But in spite of our good intentions and self complacency, most of us still do not know what cooperation is all about.

In the analysis to follow, I shall pat us on the back when we deserve it and if I get patting too low it will be because we have it coming. Sometimes bragging about ourselves backfires.

The co-ops need to better inform and train their membership, yes, and many of their officials and directors. Blind faith will carry them along for a time, but to make really loyal and efficient members they must be imbued with the spirit of cooperation. This can be accomplished only by repeatedly placing before the membership facts and figures (in small doses).

Good communications is a two-way street and understanding each other is necessary to success. What you are in on, you are not down on. If, for example, the membership fully understands where the working capital of their co-op comes from, they will not continue to demand immediate payment of their reserve certificates and at the same time urge rapid expansion of the cooperative. Some one has said, "If you fill the mind with truth, no error can creep in."

We as members and employees of co-ops need to get together a little closer. Many employees take the attitude that the cooperative belongs to the membership and, such being the case, service is just something to give when you feel like it. No doubt that is one of the weakest links in the cooperative chain.

Pleasant, neat and helpful employees can do much to cement good membership relations.

On the other hand, the member is sometimes inclined to think, "I own a part of this joint. I am entitled to a little extra service and consideration."

Wouldn't it be possible and sensible for us to reach a common plane of understanding on this explosive subject. Carl Sandburg once said that the Civil War was fought over a verb. Before the War it was the "United States ARE; after the War, "The United States IS."

Let there be unity in our cooperative membership, within our cooperative boards, and among our cooperative employees. The board members should always act as a unit when once a decision has been reached. The employees should boost the cooperative. That makes for mutual trust. I recall early days in the Midwest when horse-drawn road graders were the thing. Six horses pulled the grader and three men were the drivers, seated side by side on a wide seat. Each man drove his own team. No cooperation or trust there.

Membership relations is the one thing a cooperative has that no other organization can claim. It is up to us as old cooperators to encourage the young and the diffident to become active participants in our cooperative and thus develop a membership that is strong and united -- a membership that is proud of its organization and the prestige it has attained.

In cultivating the good graces of the new members, there is a tendency to forget the old timers. Sometimes we, as board members and active cooperators, think more of acquiring new members and of making it financially attractive to them than we do of rewarding the old members who built the organization when the going was tough. Wouldn't a little more thought of the rights and needs of the old cooperators be good membership relations?

Sometimes we fail in our membership relations for lack of diplomacy. We know what we want to accomplish, but we go about it the wrong way. We make a poor approach. What makes it doubly hard for us is that what may be the diplomatic procedure one day may be a complete failure in an almost identical situation at another time. Through trial and error and careful self analysis we can reach a point where our batting average is considerably improved.

Cooperatives are family affairs. No cooperative is really efficient without the active participation of women and the young people. Some one (it must have been a woman) said 85 percent of our purchases are made by women. In our organization at Battle Ground, we never discount the women. We encourage them in their Hen House Displays and other activities. In return, they are a big help to us at our annual meetings and all through the year in maintaining good membership relations.

I warned you that I would use ME and OUR more than YOU and YOUR. Permit me to make some more references to our co-op at Battle Ground. I believe our annual meetings are outstanding among co-ops. We have an average attendance of about 500. A short, but complete, operational report is provided. The members are given an opportunity to ask questions and to discuss situations of general interest. We try to tactfully avoid personal problems by suggesting the member take his problem up with a designated official after the meeting.

Some entertainment is provided and, of course, a good dinner is served at noon. This furnishes an opportunity to get better acquainted and to iron out little problems. The Future Homemakers of America girls of our local school cook and serve the dinner. The girls not only earn money for their group, but they also learn first hand about cooperatives.



Some of the Future Farmers of America boys and their advisors attend our annual meetings. We, as a cooperative, sponsor through our credit department, seed and fertilizer projects for active FHA and 4H members.

During the annual meeting day, we make it a point to recognize important visitors. We make sure there will be visitors present by sending out special invitations to key people in agriculture, industry, banking, and so on.

The last event of our annual meeting is a drawing of door prizes. This always holds the crowd until the close of the meeting. We try to be through the meeting by 3 o'clock so the farmers can get home in plenty of time for chores.

We work closely with farm organizations. In our section, the Grange is especially active in farm and community affairs. We use Grange insurance. This makes for good reciprocal relations, building loyalty and strength in both organizations.

Working in harmony with governmental agencies helps us a great deal in community goodwill. The County Extension Office is always willing to advise and assist us. Through cooperation, the Production Credit Association and the Farmers Home Administration have been a big help in financing patrons on large items of equipment and supplies.

We have a room upstairs in the Dairy Building that helps bring in new patrons as we keep it available to farm and agricultural organizations for a meeting place. This room is also available for 4-H meetings.

I believe one of the best aids we have for membership relations is our News Bulletin edited by Florence Robison. It not only contains up-to-the-minute cooperative information, but each issue features a farm family with a writeup and pictures. Needless to say each family is very proud to be recognized by their co-op. Gladis McKinnis writes a column that is packed with good ideas and homespun humor. This is popular with both men and women. Sometimes unusual situations arise that may give golden opportunities to develop public and membership relations. Last year I was fortunate enough to win a 10 day vacation in Hawaii. We took the trip just before the Portland Rose Festival. Our little town of Battle Ground had a float depicting the city of Honolulu. Some one had the bright idea that I should take a letter of introduction to the Mayor of Honolulu with an invitation to attend the Rose Festival as a guest of Battle Ground. I sneakily suggested that I take him a 5 pound loaf of Battle Ground cheese.

After we were settled in Honolulu, I called the mayor and made an appointment with him. He was very gracious and gave me a nice present in return for the cheese. He also had his chauffeur and his big personal limousine take us for a day's trip around the Island of Oahu and then to lunch at a real nice place on the beach. Now when Neal Blaisdell, the Mayor of Honolulu, thinks of cheese, he is not going to think of just cheese. Nor will he think of Tillamook cheese. He will think of Vern Tucker and



the famous Battle Ground cheese.

My friends---I think---still kid me about all the mileage we got out of a hunk of cheese. But, do you know, I don't just like the way they look directly at me when they say "hunk of cheese."

Now the last element I have listed for good membership relations is cheerfulness or optimism. When we greet a person, let's do it wholeheartedly with a smile. Speak as if we really are pleased. We never know how such a greeting will give the other fellow a lift. Let's be optimists.

Twixt the optimist and the pessimist  
The difference is droll.  
The optimist sees the doughnut,  
The pessimist the hole.

Being connected with a dairy co-op, I like, "An optimist says, 'Pass the cream, please.' A pessimist says 'Is there any milk in that pitcher?'"

I believe in looking on the bright side. Some folks think we should always prepare for the worst. Well, maybe there is some merit in that, but isn't there danger of getting so absorbed in such preparation that we invite disaster? On the other hand, if we take the optimistic view we could be wound up so strong that the accumulated good cheer would carry us through the recessive period and we would emerge without too much scar tissue.

### Summary and Critique

Jack Gray

Editor's note: After summarizing the remarks of the several Conference participants, Mr. Gray offered the following comments on the program:

1. There should be wider participation by cooperative representatives from the area served by the Conference.
2. There was some tendency for speakers to stray from the subject in trying to cover all possible points.
3. Panel discussion of one or more topics would add variety and interest.
4. Use of speakers from outside the cooperative field (such as Professor Van Loan) is a sound idea--perhaps it could be expanded.
5. There should be some press coverage of a Conference which attracted cooperative leaders from seven States and Canada.
6. Presentation of a case history of development of an actual member relations program would add interest.

7. The next Conference might profitably include a discussion of how a cooperative public relations program strengthens member relations.
8. The "hot potato" session was excellent in stimulating discussion. Such a session should be included in future conferences.

### Observations

J. K. Stern

This has been another good conference, due in large measure to the careful planning of Irwin Rust, Lee Garoian, and the Program Committee.

We have focused attention on common problems in member relations, we have become better acquainted with each other, and I trust that each organization has benefited by this exchange of ideas.

Most of our problems are "people." If we could solve the problems of human behavior, the other problems would be much less difficult. We forget sometimes that "everybody wants to be somebody" -- members, employees, everyone wants to be recognized. A 20-year pin, a 40-year cane, a printed story, a picture, a certificate recognizing years of service -- all are valuable tools of trade.

Some time ago an electrical company was experimenting with variable lighting, changing colors, intensities, and positions over certain machines in a large factory. Each time the experiment was tried, regardless of what they did, it increased the production of those machines, because the operators of those machines were getting special attention.

If we would remember this in working with members, working with youth and youth leaders, how much more could be accomplished. Participation builds interest and enthusiasm. The old story of the man who returned home from a meeting and when asked about it by his wife, replied - "It was a good meeting; I spoke twice" is still true.

We need to get some younger men on our boards of directors to add new ideas to the wisdom and experience of the elder statesmen who have been there a long time.

We need to take more pride in agriculture and in our cooperatives that are an essential part of this biggest industry in the United States. To attract and hold the best leadership in rural America today, we need more appreciation, more enthusiasm, and more optimism in our own group.

## WHO'S WHO AMONG THE PARTICIPANTS

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